

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 2-12 are currently pending. Claims 5 and 8-9 were previously withdrawn as directed to a non-elected species without prejudice or surrender of subject matter. Claim 10 is independent. Claim 10 is hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification as originally filed.

Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicant is entitled.

II. TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

Applicant's representative thanks the Examiner for granting the telephone interview on June 10, 2008. Applicant's representative proposed claim language to overcome the Hennequin reference. The Examiner agreed to consider a second amendment after final. However, the Examiner made no commitment as to acceptable claim language. Applicant's representative thanks the Examiner for consideration of this second amendment after a Final Action.

III. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 2-4, 6, 7, and 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,352,349 to Hennequin.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Independent claim 10 recites, *inter alia*:

“wherein the first mounting part and the second mounting part each support the winding drum from below by direct contact with the winding drum.”

Applicant has added a structural limitation to overcome the Hennequin reference.

Applicant incorporates by reference the arguments presented in his previous reply of May 13, 2008.

In summary, the Examiner had asserted Hennequin’s operating shaft 2 is supported by upper part 3, lower part 4, partition wall 11 and end wall 12. We argued that element 11 (and 12) of Hennequin is a dividing wall to form a passageway for the ladder cords but do not also support the winding drum. In response, the Examiner commented in the Advisory Action, “inasmuch as the partition wall 11 of Hennequin is an element of the assembled bearing it provides support for the operating shaft 2.”

Applicant notes in Hennequin only lower part 4 is in direct contact with the winding drum from below. That is, only lower part 4 supports the winding drum below by direct contact with the drum.

The present amendment of claim 10 adds a structural limitation that defines the relationship between the first and second mounting parts and the winding drum. The first and second mounting parts: (1) form a through hole when assembled, and also (2) function to support

the winding drum from below by direct contact with the winding drum. Applicant believes this structural limitation distinguishes the present claims from the Hennequin reference.

Thus, claim 10 recites, “a first mounting part . . . a second mounting part assembled to the first mounting part, said first mounting part and said second mounting part shaped to provide a through hole when assembled . . . wherein the first mounting part and the second mounting part each support the winding drum from below by direct contact with the winding drum.”

Hence, claim 10 is not anticipated by Hannequin because that reference does not disclose each and every element recited in the claim.

IV. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims are dependent from claim 10 as discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Claims 2-4, 6, 7, and 10-12 are in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference, or references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicant respectfully requests early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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